

VZCZCXRO6028  
PP RUEHDBU  
DE RUEHKV #4062/01 2931625  
ZNY SSSSS ZZH  
P 201625Z OCT 06  
FM AMEMBASSY KYIV  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0125  
INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE  
RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 KYIV 004062

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/20/2016  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [YI](#) [RS](#) [AZ](#) [GG](#) [MD](#) [UP](#)  
SUBJECT: UKRAINE: GUAM STATEMENT CRITICIZES RUSSIAN ACTIONS  
TOWARD GEORGIA

Classified By: Political Counselor Kent Logsdon for reasons 1.4(b,d)

¶1. (U) The Organization for Democracy and Economic Development - GUAM issued a statement dated October 16 on Russia-Georgia tension on the margins of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Council of Foreign Ministers in Minsk. The press reported that Ukrainian delegation head First Deputy FM Volodymyr Ohryzko read the statement, which, while trying to strike a balance between the two sides, welcomed Georgia's release of detained Russian soldiers and implicitly criticized Russian measures against Georgia as not in keeping with the CIS founding principles. (Embassy's informal translation is in para 6.)

¶2. (U) Earlier, during the October 15 GUAM parliamentary assembly meeting in Chisinau, the press noted that Georgian Parliamentary Speaker Nino Burjanadze had aimed fire at the Ukrainian delegation, led by Parliament (Rada) First Deputy Speaker and Communist Party Rada member Adam Martynyuk, for its reluctance to tackle the issue of Russian-Georgian relations. According to media reports, the Ukrainian and Moldovan delegations were reluctant to discuss Russia-Georgia relations or issue a statement, either separately or in the final communique.

¶3. (C) In an October 18 conversation, Deputy Foreign Minister Andriy Veselovsky said the Ukrainian MFA had proposed to Georgia that GUAM release a statement at the Minsk CIS gathering. The Ukrainian MFA had negotiated the text with the Georgian MFA, then circulated the text for further comment from Moldova and Azerbaijan. Veselovsky downplayed the Ukrainian delegation's failure to support a similar statement in Chisinau by noting the parliamentary assembly had been in existence only a year and the newly elected Ukrainian and Azerbaijani parliaments were still feeling their way in the GUAM parliamentary assembly.

¶4. (S) The Ukrainian Defense Ministry, for its part, quietly hosted an unpublicized visit to Kyiv of the Georgian Defense Minister October 16. Defense Minister Hrytsenko told the Ambassador October 13 that he wanted to engage his Georgian colleague without raising Moscow's ire that would inevitably result from a public visit at this time. Hrytsenko voiced his concerns that the Russian-Georgian situation was more grave than most people realized, claiming that the Russian military, following required internal procedures, had been collecting signatures from soldiers who had served/were serving in Chechnya willing to be sent to Georgia to fight.

¶5. (C) Comment: The split in the policy approaches taken by a legislative delegation, on the one hand, and the executive branch, on the other, reflects a greater lack of policy coherence within the Ukrainian government as a whole, as President Yushchenko wrestles with Prime Minister Yanukovych

and his parliamentary backers for control over foreign policy. Shrewd bureaucrats like Veselovsky will seek opportunities to seize the initiative through pre-existing mechanisms such as GUAM. Veselovsky is likely to aim to further cement government policy in a proposed November 15 political directors' meeting in Kyiv on neighborhood policy, building on the October 5 E-PINE political directors meeting that was also in Kyiv. End comment.

#### GUAM Statement

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¶6. (U) Text of the October 16 GUAM statement appears below.

Begin text.

The Organization for Democracy and Economic Development - GUAM welcomes Georgia's decision to transfer the detained military officers to the Russian Federation as a measure aimed at relieving the tension that emerged in bilateral relations.

Any inappropriate actions applied by one Commonwealth member to another member are not in keeping with the principles of relations set forth in the founding documents of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

GUAM urges the cessation of unilateral actions towards Georgia aimed at stopping economic, humanitarian and other interstate ties.

GUAM expresses its confidence that the problems that emerged, including those related to conflict settlement, have to be resolved at the negotiation table in accordance with commonly accepted norms and principles of international law,

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sovereignty, territorial integrity, and border integrity found in the UN charter and OSCE and CIS founding documents.

GUAM welcomes the Russian Federation's commitment to withdraw Russian military bases and military objects of the Russian Group of Troops in Transcaucasia from Georgian territory in ¶2008.

GUAM also supports Georgian initiatives on settling conflicts on its territory, in particular propositions aimed at broadening the format of negotiations and peacekeeping operations.

GUAM addresses other Commonwealth member states, urging them to support efforts to overcome the crisis in relations between the Russian Federation and Georgia.

End text.

¶7. (U) Visit Embassy Kyiv's classified website:  
[www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/kiev](http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/kiev).  
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